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doubt, and then adding to it piece by piece, to which we object. Let us have a complete survey of the whole field at a given period, rather than the addition of features presented by new developments to a work which, by lapse of time, has lost a part of its usefulness.

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THE LAW OF RAILWAY BONDS AND MORTGAGES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, with Illustrative Cases from English and Colonial Courts. By EDWARD LYMAN SHORT, of the New York Bar, General Solicitor of the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1897.

The author, in his preface, has given a very clear idea of the purpose which he wished to accomplish in this volume. "What the lawyer mainly wants," he says, "is a case, or cases, on the particular points involved in the matter before him." Again: "No practicing lawyer can do the work required to produce an entirely satisfactory treatise on the case law of the average subject." Again: "Legal opinions are largely mere predictions of what courts would more or less certainly decide. In the application of the principles and rules of law to the business life of the world, it is safer for clients that advice given should rest wherever possible on known decisions of controlling courts rather than on the clever guesses of able counsel." Again: "It has always been my view that the chief value of the text-book to the practitioner lies in the fact that, when properly compiled, it will enable him to find any point in the law of his subject which has either been decided, discussed, or even referred to incidentally. *Ordinary digests are incapable of such detail owing to lack of space.*"

It will be seen, therefore, that he has not, in this work, attempted to realize a very high ideal. While admitting that certain text-books (such as Benjamin on Sales) do accomplish a purpose unattempted by him, he distinctly disavows any effort to imitate them, and purposely confines his efforts to a book which shall differ from an ordinary digest, only in the fact that it is larger and, therefore, more complete. We admit the cogency of the argument that is well nigh impossible for a busy lawyer to accomplish more than this, and yet so well has Mr. Short done what he tried to do, that we cannot but regret that he was not more ambitious in his efforts.

Within the limitations thus indicated he certainly has produced a very useful reference book. The practitioner cannot fail to find useful the very complete reference to authorities (including all the recent authorities), and the, on the whole, admirable arrangement of the subject-matter. What the busy lawyer wants to know is the nature of bonds and the rights of bondholders, the nature of mortgages and the rights of mortgage holders and trustees, and particularly the remedies on both the original and the collateral obligation. This, in the main, Mr. Short has furnished him, and very clearly. Some criticism may certainly be made of the arrangement, or even of the propriety of certain chapters—such, for ex-

ample, as Chapter V., on "Definitions of Words and Phrases," and Chapter VI., on "Construction Contracts," which are placed between the chapters on bonds and those on mortgages—the reason for which is not by any means obvious. There are some few mistakes in punctuation which are, perhaps, unavoidable in a work of this size, and yet which ought not to occur in a digest. On page 19 the classification indicated by the figure "5" should probably be indicated by letter "d," and in the note the word "interpose" is used instead of "interfere." Again, on page 20, the name of the case is omitted, when the citation is given—an alleged virtue, according to some authorities, but a defect in a book where the authorities are, on the whole, so fully and carefully cited as in Mr. Short's. The occasional slips in the punctuation, however, only serve to emphasize the great care which must have been taken in the reading of the proof.

We are disposed to think that Mr. Short forgot his theory in writing certain of the chapters; for example, Chapter XIV., on "Rolling Stock and Car Trusts," and Chapter XXVIII., on "Preferred Debts," are more than usually good discussions of very interesting topics, and the author has gone so far in some cases as actually to take exception to certain rulings of the courts and to express an opinion to the contrary. We repeat that we wish he had applied the same good judgment by a criticism of the large number of cases where the courts were in direct conflict, as we cannot but feel that the lawyer's debt to his profession is not fully paid unless he has given, for what it is worth, his own judgment as to what the law should be, as well as his recital of what the law is.

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R. D. B.

MINERAL LAW DIGEST. Callaghan & Co., Chicago. 1897.

Mr. Clark, one of the compilers of the Mineral Law Digest, calls our attention to the fact that no claim to exhaustive treatment of Mineral Law in general is made for this book, but only of the Mineral Public Land Law, as found in the Statutes of the United States and applying to the states and territories where such lands still exist. In our review of last month we recognized the limitations of the treatment, but mistook the extent of the claims made for the work. *Pa. Coal Co. v. Sanderson*, however, the absence of which from the Digest we noted, certainly was a case of "mineral land law," as the question was what constitutes a "natural use" of the mineral lands. The claim of exhaustiveness we quoted contained no limitation to Federal land law; but if that was the intention we are glad to remark it, and to absolve Mr. Clark and his able companions from the imputation of not doing all they set out to do.

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REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION; held at Cleveland, Ohio, August, 1897. Philadelphia: Dando Printing and Publishing Co. 1897.

This book is valuable to the profession in general, because of the